



## **Rhode Island Emergency Management Advisory Council**

### MINUTES

**Stated Meeting  
September 2, 2004  
2:00 P.M.**

The Rhode Island Emergency Management Headquarters  
645 New London Ave. – Cranston, RI

### Agenda

#### **I. Call to Order/Attendance**

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:08 pm. In attendance were:

Lt. Governor Charles J. Fogarty	Albert Scappaticci
Senator John Tassoni	Ray LaBelle
Janice McClanaghan	James Lanni
Dr. Anthony Cirillo	Thomas Kilday
Michael Mulhare	Captain Mary Landry
John Enright	Robert Corrente
Irving J. Owens	Robin Erickson
Raymond Sullivan	

#### **II. Approval of Minutes from August 24, 2004**

The meeting opened at 2:07 p.m. as the chairman asked that the minutes of the previous meeting be accepted and entered as read.

#### **III. Introduction**

A. Comments from the Chairman  
*Lieutenant Governor Charles J. Fogarty*

Lt. Governor Fogarty welcomed all to the meeting and began by saying that he'd like to arrange a formal briefing on the EMAP and Titan reports for the council in the relatively near future. This, he hopes, will be an

opportunity for those agencies interviewed for and affected by both these reports to weigh in with additional questions and comments. While the release of both these reports lead some to speculate on the state's overall ability to respond in the event of a disaster, the chairman noted that they must be taken in context and that a number of the recommendations put forth by Titan and EMAP were already in the process of being implemented by RIEMA.

The Lt. Governor also spoke of RIEMA's expanded role since 9/11/01, and noted that its budget and staffing have both declined over the years. Chairman Fogarty said the state needs to re-examine its commitment to RIEMA, and ensure that the organization has the appropriate personnel and resources to do its job. He said the state cannot simply rely on Department of Homeland Security as its principle funding source.

The chairman also mentioned that he will be inviting representatives from the Raynham, MA police department and Massachusetts Department of Homeland Security (Region 5) to speak about a public safety communications network pilot program to speak at the next meeting.

#### B. Comments for the Vice Chairman

*Maj. General Reginald Centracchio*

The General said the Department of Homeland Security has raised concerns over possible terrorist activity on or before the upcoming General Election. In the coming weeks, RIEMA will meet with the appropriate state agencies to address safety needs at Rhode Island's polling stations.

The vice chairman also commented on the EMAP report and said that RIEMA was happy to voluntarily participate in the evaluation and was already implementing some of the recommended changes. He's said readiness is a responsibility that should be shared by all state agencies, and that the new EOP will be reflective of increased communication and coordination of appropriate organizations.

The Governor has called for a Homeland Security Summit, to be held at the Naval War College. The purpose of the summit will discuss our current level of preparedness, discuss the state's new strategy and how it relates to new federal mandates from the Department of Homeland Security.

#### IV. **Introduction and Comments from the United States Attorney, District of Rhode Island –**

*Mr. Robert Corrente*

Lt. Governor Fogarty introduced Mr. Corrente, congratulated him on his appointment and welcomed him to the meeting on behalf of the council. Mr. Corrente began his comments by thanking John Enright for his work in coordinating the state's anti-terrorism efforts, and for the increased

level of communication that now exists between government officials at the federal, state and local levels.

Mr. Corrente said he has spent much of his time meeting with many of these state and local agencies in an effort to continue the exchange of appropriate information.

One of the challenges Mr. Corrente says his offices faces, is fighting that Rhode Island is immune from terrorist activity and that this state's infrastructure has fewer high-risk targets than states such as Massachusetts, New York and California.

The US Attorney is also committed to sustaining the efforts and enthusiasm that exists in the public safety community and says the state must continue its current level up self-discipline and diligence in training and preparation.

**V. West Nile Virus / EEE Update – Rhode Island Department of Environmental Mangt.**

The Department of Environmental Management recently announced that test results from 177 mosquito pools from a total of 52 traps set statewide between August 18 and 23 are negative for both West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). Twenty additional pools are pending, and one, from August 23, was previously reported as positive for EEE.

Increasing numbers of mosquito pools, or samples, testing positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis in Southern New England indicate that Rhode Island is at a higher than normal risk for EEE.

To date, four mosquito pools in Rhode Island have tested positive for EEE, as have 25 mosquito pools in southeastern Massachusetts and 13 in eastern Connecticut.

Because of the heightened health risk, DEM is advising Rhode Islanders to take extra care to protect themselves, particularly when mosquito-biting activity is high. Biting activity depends on several conditions. It generally is greatest from dusk to dawn. During the day it decreases in sunny areas at lower temperatures and increases in shady areas at higher temperatures. Biting activity also generally increases with high humidity and with low wind.

Personal protection is the first line of defense against mosquitoes that can carry diseases such as West Nile Virus and EEE and is by far the most effective way of avoiding infection. People should routinely use mosquito repellent and cover up when mosquito-biting activity is greatest. They should place mosquito netting over playpens and carriages outside, and be sure that screens are in good repair. Mosquito repellent should contain no more than 30 percent DEET, and it should not be used on infants.

## **Adjournment**

With no further business appearing before the Council, the Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn, a motion was made by Ray LaBelle and seconded by Mr. Sullivan. The meeting was adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

- Any comments or questions please contact Ray Sullivan in the Lt. Governor's Office at 222-2371.